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Wednesday, 6 October 1993 at 10 a.m.

NEW YORK

President: INSANALLY
(Guyana)

The meeting was called to order at 10.35 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 9 (*continued*)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. KIJINER (Marshall Islands): On behalf of the people and the Government of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, I warmly congratulate Ambassador Samuel Insanally on his election as President of what promises to be a historic session of the General Assembly. I would also like to express my country's profound appreciation to his predecessor, Mr. Stoyan Ganev, Foreign Minister of Bulgaria, for his superior guidance during a time of unprecedented change.

We are gathered here at a crucial juncture in human history when numerous changes are becoming apparent. Few of us ever imagined that we would witness in our lifetimes the dismantling of the Berlin Wall, a handshake between the leaders of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the peaceful separation of Eritrea from Ethiopia after decades of war, or the transition to a Government in South Africa that is truly representative of its people. In the current international climate we can be optimistic about the peaceful resolution of the difficult problems of our time. However, at the same time our world witnesses these triumphs of the human spirit, it also faces grave new problems, such as the tragedies that are unfolding in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Somalia.

The new order will require fundamental changes in the attitudes and thinking of nations and all mankind. Gone are the clearly defined divisions of super-Power conflict. In their place are a myriad of problems, suppressed during the cold war, that are now resurfacing. The confrontation between East and West has given way to more intricate problems, without readily apparent solutions. There are no easy answers for bringing restraint to the extremes of ethnic and religious nationalism, or promoting human rights and sustainable development. Yet the past few months have shown the real progress that can be made on even the most intractable problems. Rather than wringing our hands, we must draw upon the diversity of views represented in this grand Hall and upon the examples of those who dedicated their lives to the struggle to bring peace to the world.

The world's billions are increasingly looking to the United Nations for solutions. However, as currently structured and financed, the United Nations by itself cannot accommodate the breadth and gravity of the many problems it faces. It is our view that the Organization must be carefully re-evaluated to ensure its effectiveness in a situation of new realities. We support the creation of an Office of Inspector General and will continue to study the various proposals for expansion of the Security Council membership.

As proud Members of this body, we cheer our Organization's successes and are troubled by its few setbacks. The Marshallese people mourn the loss of members of United Nations peace-keeping missions, which are bravely endeavouring to maintain peace and provide assistance to those in danger.

Allow me, for a moment, to address the special situation of the island nations. The physical limitations of

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islands and their lack of natural resources, which larger nations might regard as insurmountable barriers, we, by necessity, view as challenges to overcome. Throughout history, islanders have displayed a remarkable degree of innovation and adaptation, which has allowed us to survive numerous natural and man-made disasters. Our people and way of life were not deterred by the horrors of modern weaponry from which the Marshallese people suffered during the nuclear testing. Despite the end of the super-Power arms race, the world must still confront the grave dangers of nuclear testing, nuclear proliferation, and the production, transit and disposal of nuclear material. The Marshall Islands will forever have a special interest in the dismantling of nuclear weapons because many Marshallese people are still prevented from returning to their ancestors' homeland.

As survivors of that legacy, we very much welcomed the nuclear-testing moratorium. We are greatly distressed that this moratorium has now been broken by one of the nuclear Powers, and we would appeal to the others not to follow this path. I should like to lend my Government's voice to the voices of others that have called for negotiations on a lasting and effective comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty that will enjoy universal adherence. It is the wish of the people of the Marshall Islands that no one else should have to endure the same hardships and physical harm that we did. We pray for a world free from nuclear testing and intend to participate actively in the steps leading to such a treaty.

We were proud to be one of the first signatories of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction earlier this year in Paris. We will do our part to contribute to the goal of the abolition of that immoral class of weapons and commend the many officials who worked on the Convention for their tireless efforts.

Perhaps the most effective way to avoid the grave consequences of nuclear weapons is to address the problem at its source by prohibiting the production of weapons--grade plutonium. We therefore look forward to working on a treaty to this effect, and we commend the United States and others for taking the lead in this regard.

The islands of the Pacific are especially vulnerable to the dangers posed by transport of nuclear material. We hope that such shipments will cease. If they are to continue, the States responsible must take every precaution to ensure that the safety of States along the sea lanes and the high seas is ensured.

All of humanity is shocked by the brutality of nationalist and ethnic conflicts raging throughout the world today. The possibility of introducing nuclear weapons in these disputes threatens global peace and security and raises the spectre of death and suffering on a magnitude never before witnessed. My Government will continue to support all efforts to limit the spread of nuclear weapons.

The efforts of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in the area of nuclear safeguards merit special praise. I am very pleased to report that last week the Marshall Islands was accepted as a member of the IAEA, and we look forward to contributing to the work of the Agency. We are confident that the Agency's vast expertise in the area of protection from radiation can shed light on the matter and at the same time come up with remedial treatment for the many Marshallese victims afflicted by numerous cancerous diseases resulting from nuclear testing.

My Government warmly applauds the increased attention by the world community to human rights and democratic institutions. Although it fell short of some of our expectations, this year's World Conference on Human Rights was an important milestone in the efforts to protect the rights of individuals and vulnerable sectors of society. Perhaps more important, the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action clearly demonstrated that respect for basic human rights and fundamental freedoms can exist in a context of cultural diversity.

As important as the Vienna Declaration is, it is meaningless without the means to enforce its provisions. We will therefore continue strongly to support efforts aimed at creating a post of United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and a Special Rapporteur for Women's Rights, and we will continue to study proposals for an international court with jurisdiction to consider cases of human-rights violations.

Tomorrow's leaders are today's children. With this in mind, we must ensure that our children are well prepared to accept the mantle that will be passed on to them. For decades, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has advanced this objective with determination, and we are especially appreciative of its assistance to the Marshallese children. We are proud to have recently ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and we encourage others to do the same so that the world may attain UNICEF's goal of universal adherence by the year 2000.

The Marshall Islands are endowed with natural beauty and a rich cultural heritage. The development potential of our islands resides in the preservation of their fragile environment. Because our land area is so limited, we treat it with the greatest respect and conserve it as best we can.

Given the small land area of our atolls, we face constraints to agricultural and industrial development. As the pressure from a growing population increases in my country, additional demands are made on our resources. Regrettably, we have become increasingly dependent on imports to meet basic human needs.

The long distances from markets of many islands result in especially high transport costs. In our case, we are almost 2,000 miles from the nearest major market for our goods. Consequently, transport costs raise the cost of goods to levels that are often not competitive. Even with competitive products, restrictive trade barriers further limit our access to markets. We are hopeful that the negotiations of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) will produce a trade agreement that is equitable and fair to all nations.

The Marshall Islands welcomes with gratitude the recently approved country programme of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). It would be especially welcome if this plan of action could assist my country significantly along the road to sustainable development. The spirit of cooperation that was exhibited at the first round-table meeting in 1991 is evident in this programme. It is hoped that this will be the first step in a long and fruitful partnership and that the UNDP will become more responsive to the special needs of the Marshall Islands. Like many of the island States in the region, the Marshall Islands is not a traditional recipient of overseas development aid, and we have few bilateral partners. Given its regional expertise, we are pleased that UNDP is becoming a major focal point for our development assistance. UNDP understands the complexities of the Pacific region and the development challenge for the island States. We hope that the UNDP budget for the region will not be cut back any further. The Pacific is a vast area, and the logistical challenges faced by the field office in Suva, Fiji, are daunting.

Sustainable development is a primary objective of Government planning. We are increasingly aware of the limits that constrain our development potential. We want to prosper on the resources that we have, but we do not want to repeat mistakes that others have made on their road to development. I commend our neighbour, Papua New Guinea, for the important work it has initiated to integrate sustainable development into the framework of international relations.

The Marshall Islands is a small nation, and we increasingly feel the strain caused by our expenditures on the United Nations. We are, of course, very grateful and proud to be a part of this body, but we are becoming worried at the scale of new contributions, particularly for peace-keeping operations. The burden of membership is not shared equally by every citizen of the world, and we would like to see this inequity in contributions addressed in some way. If one looks at the cost of United Nations membership on a *per capita* basis, one sees that the island States are among the very top contributors.

The vulnerability of small islands to natural disasters and to fluctuations in the world economy make it difficult to quantify the well-being of our people. Calculations of *per capita* gross domestic product and other traditional economic indices do not accurately represent the standard of living in the islands. Perhaps other criteria could be devised to reflect the complexities of our situation.

The Marshall Islands was one of the first countries to ratify the Conventions adopted at the Rio Conference on the environment. Developments subsequent to the Rio summit have been closely observed by the Marshall Islands Government. It is our sincere hope that the process initiated at Rio de Janeiro will succeed, so that our islands can be saved from possible destruction by global climate change. The Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States will increase world-wide understanding of the vulnerability of our islands. The Government of Barbados is to be thanked for generously offering to host that Conference next year. We are, however, a little disturbed by the response by some donor countries to the Conference. It must be reiterated that the Conference has its mandate from Rio and from the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly, and that it should be considered as a test case for sustainable development. It will be an attempt to address issues that are specific to small island States in their quest for sustainable development. The will of the global community to live up to the promises made in Rio will face its first test, and the implications of the outcome of the Conference will be significant to all.

Throughout history the sea has united my people and has been vital to our lives. It provides our nourishment; it is a source of income; and our culture and traditions have in large part been shaped by the ocean. The majority of

our population derives its livelihood from ocean-based activities, and our territorial waters abound with fish that can feed people around the world. Clearly, our fate is tied to the ocean. Today, however, our way of life is threatened by a rise in the level of the very ocean that has given us life for thousands of years. We are greatly appreciative of the efforts and attention given to the problem by the world community, most notably in the Framework Convention on Climate Change, signed at the Rio Earth Summit, which my Government is proud to have ratified.

However, for a low-lying atoll like the Marshall Islands the Framework Convention may have come too late. We are eager that funds from all sectors of the United Nations system, especially the Global Environment Facility, be made available for the purpose of adaptation to a rise in the sea level. We also realize fully that changes required of residents of industrialized countries will entail considerable sacrifice, at least initially. However, countless studies have shown that steps to reduce carbon-dioxide emissions would greatly benefit those countries in the future.

The threat to the Marshall Islands is imminent. Our way of life is threatened. My country is threatened with a loss of identity and culture. We are powerless in the hands of others and my country may cease to exist as a result.

I would like everyone in this Hall to visit our corner of the world before it disappears. I hope that 30 years from today our islands will not have been swamped by the sea and that we will be able to invite you again, rather than referring you to a page in a history book. For many, the Marshall Islands may be little more than specks on the map. The peoples of the Pacific hold a very different view of the world: that the world would be greatly diminished by the loss of even one of the diverse cultures that have been crafted by mankind.

Let us strive during the coming months to work in tandem and to endeavour to fulfil the grand aspirations and lofty goals that this Organization represents. As we do this, allow me to offer a Marshallese proverb to guide our work: "*Jouj eo mour eo, lej eo mij eo*" - "Alone we cannot survive, but together we are strong".

Mr. AL-KHALIFA (Bahrain) *(interpretation from Arabic):* At the outset, I take pleasure, Sir, in congratulating you sincerely, on behalf of the delegation of the State of Bahrain's delegation, on your election as President of the Assembly at this session. As you assume your important task, it is my pleasure also to wish you success in carrying out your duties and to assure you of my delegation's full cooperation with you in making the work of this session a success.

I take this opportunity to convey thanks and appreciation to your predecessor, Mr. Stoyan Ganev, who conducted the proceedings of the last session with skill and efficiency.

It is also my pleasure to mention with great appreciation the continuing efforts of the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, to further the objectives of the United Nations and his tireless drive to enhance the Organization's role in maintaining international peace and security.

I should also like to take this opportunity to extend our warmest congratulations to the delegations of the Slovak Republic, the Czech Republic, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Eritrea, the Principality of Monaco and the Principality of Andorra on their accession to the membership of the United Nations.

Because of the important issues on our agenda, this session of the General Assembly is a significant one indeed. These issues under consideration demand close attention, if we are to benefit from the object lessons of the past in formulating future parameters, as is required by the ever-accelerating changes in the international arena. As we look at the historical events, that have followed upon one another, we find that the world is in the midst of a qualitative transformation that is virtually unprecedented. If we examine the causes and aspects of that transformation, we shall find that the conflict that raged between the eastern and the western blocs was no mere ideological dispute articulated in academic forums. Rather, it was a violent political type of rivalry that escalated into grave military confrontations that were, at times, direct and at others, indirect, between the super-Powers. The past few years, however, have witnessed the end of that conflict, and this in turn has entailed major changes in the political outlook of various world Powers.

It is regrettable indeed that, in the midst of these changes, new problems have surfaced and have thus strengthened our conviction that the ending of the cold war will not make the world a more secure and stable place. For all its conflicts and tensions the cold war, when it ended, contrary to all expectations has brought to the surface the banes of extreme nationalism and such

aberrations as "ethnic cleansing", things which had been dormant in Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

This has led, in certain regions, to acts of violence that threaten to change the very nature of relations between States at a time when the path of international politics has become really bumpy as a result of the restructuring of the world order. This is a time of profound change in the lives of States and nations in which people's aspirations after stability and development merge with the fears generated by the gap between a developed, affluent world and a world that is unable to meet the minimum requirements of decent living.

The major transformations that are taking place today, in the areas of politics, technology and information, underscore the fact that our world has become a truly global village and that the scientific revolution is about to bring down the barriers and boundaries between its various countries and regions. It is regrettable indeed, at such a juncture, that while we stand on the threshold of a new century of man's history, we perceive that the interests of humanity lag behind the advances made by science and technology. It is paradoxical indeed that the increased interdependence dictated by the developments that are taking place at the present time should go hand in hand with political fragmentation and clash of interests as individual States pursue their own narrow interests and ambitions.

Such a situation should urge us to look at what is going on around us with a large magnifying glass so that we may be able to fathom the depths of international problems and scrutinize their interlocking strands on the wider screen of the global scene. If we take the measure of the rapid changes in the international arena, we may be able to foresee the enormity of the dangers that the future may bring and the extent of the harm to peoples' security and stability that may result therefrom. For, in a world whose spaces and distances have shrunk and whose different parts have come closer together more than at any other time before, peace cannot be achieved in one region while the peace of another region is left at the mercy of tensions. It is therefore incumbent upon us all to develop a practical strategy for the future through a new outlook that would be capable of grasping and understanding the nature and drift of the changes and harnessing them in the service of humanity as a whole and for the strengthening of security throughout the world.

After this introduction, which reflects the way we see the past and look at the present, my delegation should like to share with you certain thoughts on the building of the post-cold-war world:

Firstly: there should be agreement on new concepts concerning the issues of world peace and development that would rid the world of the residues and perceptions of the ideological and strategic thinking that prevailed throughout the cold-war period;

Secondly: appropriate criteria should be defined for the achievement of world stability through the common security of all States;

Thirdly: existing and traditional boundaries between States should be respected, and all boundary disputes should be resolved by peaceful means that are agreed upon by the parties concerned; and

Fourthly: there should be support for the United Nations, as the appropriate international tool for the establishment of a new international order where justice, equality, respect for international resolutions and the abandonment of double standards prevail.

War and peace are inseparable opposites. Given this perspective, the most difficult task in international politics is to devise an effective machinery to prevent the causes of war on the one hand, and to preserve, maintain or keep the peace, on the other. It is our conviction that current international developments have created favourable conditions for making use of the United Nations potential to create a political climate that would be favourable for developing the foundations of a collective security system.

Here it should be pointed out that one of the most important means suggested for promoting collective security is the use of preventive diplomacy to prevent disputes from arising between parties and to prevent existing disputes from escalating, and the development of preventive deployment of United Nations forces in such a way as to allow those forces to defuse potential tensions in any region of the world. We hope that Member States will reach a consensus on the formation of such forces, and that cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations can be enhanced so that the regional organizations' experience and their human and material resources in the field of peace-keeping can be tapped.

In this context, I applaud the current cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States and emphasize the importance of enhancing and

strengthening the existing relations between the two organizations in all fields.

The United Nations now approaches its fiftieth anniversary. The peoples of the world, with their hopes and aspirations, continue to look to the Organization to lead the way to the turning of a new leaf in the history of international relations so that they can finally enjoy the security, peace and stability for which they have long yearned.

The world Organization has managed, since its beginnings, to achieve some of the purposes of the Charter, but has failed to achieve others. It is now at a juncture where new hopes, accompanied by new problems, have arisen. Over the last five decades, the membership of the Organization has risen from 51 States in 1954 to 184 in 1993. This calls for restructuring the Organization's principal organs, especially the Secretariat and the Security Council. We welcome the Secretary-General's statement, in his Agenda for Peace, that important steps have been taken to reorganize the Secretariat in order to avoid duplication and overlapping of functions and to enhance its effectiveness. We call for further reforms to be effected, methodically, so that the Secretariat can perform its duties to the optimum.

As for the Security Council and its role in the maintenance of international peace and security, the development of this important organ and the review of the provisions relating to its membership have recently been the object of world attention. Consequently, the General Assembly has included in the agenda of its forty-eighth session an item entitled "Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council".

The inclusion of this item has taken place in response to the desire of many States to emphasize the importance of adequate and equitable representation in the membership of this important organ in line with the increase in the membership of the Organization and the glaring disparity between the composition of the Council and the membership of the United Nations. From 20 per cent in 1945, the proportion has dropped to 8 per cent now. We support the call for a review of the composition of the Security Council that would ensure equitable geographical representation.

I should like, in this connection, to refer to the resolution adopted by the Arab League Council at its regular session, held in Cairo from 19 through 21 September 1993, which calls upon the United Nations to take due consideration of the need for equitable geographical representation and to establish a permanent seat on the Security Council for the Arab Group.

We should like to stress that it is vitally important to ensure that in adopting any of the proposed formulas for increasing the membership of the Security Council, care must be taken that this should not lead to impeding the proper functioning by the Council in carrying out its duties, and that the power of veto should not be used as a means of undermining the decision-making process or of diluting the urgent nature of critical issues, especially those which have to do with peace and security.

In recent weeks, a ray of hope that augurs well for the future of world peace has appeared on the horizon of the Middle East and the world at large: namely, the accord signed by the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and Israel. We have consistently encouraged any sign of movement towards a peaceful, just and comprehensive settlement of the Palestine question. There is firm hope today that this step will be a precursor to a real opening for peace and stability in the Middle East region.

While we welcome this significant and historic step, we view it as a first step on the road to a just, lasting and comprehensive solution to the Palestine question and the Arab-Israeli conflict, based on Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) and other resolutions of international legality as well as the land-for-peace principle. We hope that efforts will continue to be made towards the speedy implementation of the provisions of the accord and that the negotiations between other Arab parties and Israel will make progress on the other tracks so that the existing opportunities for peace may be put to good use.

We look forward to the day when the Israeli forces will withdraw from the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, including Holy Jerusalem, the occupied Syrian Golan Heights and the occupied Lebanese and Jordanian territories, and to the day when the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people, including the right of return for the Palestinian refugees, will be guaranteed, in consonance with relevant United Nations resolutions.

It should be emphasized that stability in the Middle East is fully dependent on its being freed from chemical, biological and nuclear weapons. Declaring the Middle East a region free of weapons of mass destruction would enable its States to focus their attention on questions of

economic, scientific and technological development and would encourage them to cooperate in the field of peaceful uses of nuclear energy and to make a constructive contribution to the maintenance of world peace.

Two devastating wars have swept over the Gulf, and their consequences have adversely affected development in the area. It behooves us, therefore, to intensify efforts to keep that important area free of any further tensions, through the settlement of disputes by peaceful means and through respect for the principles of territorial integrity and political independence, the sovereignty of States over their own resources, non-interference in the internal affairs of other States and strict observance of the norms of international legality.

We should like to emphasize the need for Iraq to implement Security Council resolutions relevant to its aggression against the State of Kuwait, and in particular the provisions of Security Council resolution 687 (1991) relating, *inter alia*, to the release of Kuwaiti and other prisoners of war and detainees, and to recognize the international boundaries between Kuwait and Iraq as demarcated and set out in Security Council resolution 833 (1993).

We also hope that the dialogue between the United Arab Emirates and the Islamic Republic of Iran will lead to the settlement of all outstanding questions regarding the three islands of Abu Mousa, Greater Tunb and Lesser Tunb in a manner that would guarantee the rights of the United Arab Emirates as set out in the resolutions of the Gulf States Cooperation Council.

The international arena has witnessed some development, this year, in relation to the situation in Somalia. Although that situation continues to irk the conscience of the international community, the United Nations has been able, through the efforts of a large number of its members, to restore peace in most parts of Somalia. Security Council resolution 814 (1993) has had a positive effect in improving the situation after the drawn out suffering experienced by the people of that country. We should like to voice support for United Nations efforts to rebuild the political, economic and social infrastructure of Somalia. We hope that the Somali people will be able to reach comprehensive national reconciliation between the various factions.

The world has been following the tragic situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Despite all the efforts deployed in an attempt to contain the conflict, we see no glimmer of hope that aggression against that country will cease. The Serbian side rejected the Vance-Owen peace plan, while the Government of Bosnia-Herzegovina accepted it. Massacres and acts of aggression against Bosnian cities continue unabated, and the Serb forces have committed the most atrocious crimes of genocide and "ethnic cleansing" in open defiance of the international community. Yet the Security Council has not taken any effective measure to suppress the aggression or to enable the legitimate Bosnian Government to defend itself. That, surely, sends the wrong message to all those who do not believe in the system of international collective security and could give rise to a surge of violence and extremism that would have an adverse effect on the United Nations endeavours to contain existing and potential conflicts in the world.

The international community is duty-bound to move urgently to stop the aggression against the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, to safeguard the legitimate rights of its people, to force the aggressors to comply with the principles of international legality, to prevent any demographic change or any territorial gains through the policy of *fait accompli* pursued by the Serbs and the Croats, and to enable the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina to exercise the right of self-defence by lifting the embargo on arms supplies to it.

It is regrettable, at a time when the features of a new world order are beginning to take shape, that Central Asia should be in the grip of a situation of instability that threatens to tear it apart. Internal strife continues without let up in Tajikistan and Georgia and the war between Armenia and Azerbaijan has grown even more vicious. In this connection, my delegation supports Security Council resolutions 822 (1993) and 853 (1993), which reaffirm the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and of all other States in the region and the inadmissibility of the use of force for the acquisition of territory. We reaffirm our endorsement of the efforts made by the United Nations and regional organizations to restore stability in that region.

For years, the Cyprus problem has continued to defy solution. We are encouraged, however, by the efforts of the Secretary-General to bring the two Cypriot parties closer to agreement. Despite the remaining obstacles that obstruct the settlement of this problem, it is our view that the good offices of the Secretary-General should continue until a solution that would be satisfactory to both parties may be reached.

With regard to the situation in Cambodia, positive results have been achieved, and the United Nations,

through the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC), has been able to restore political stability to that country. We should like on this occasion to extend our sincere congratulations to the people and Government of Cambodia on the outcome of their efforts in pursuit of national reconciliation and peace. We also commend the constructive efforts of UNTAC in carrying out its mandate in Cambodia.

South Africa is now going through a significant and crucial phase in its march towards political reform. The main features of this reform are the agreement on the drafting of a new constitution, the formation of a new transitional multi-party Government, and the agreement to hold constitutional elections in April 1994. These developments demonstrate the sincere desire of all parties in South Africa to turn a new leaf in their relations. We support the reforms currently under way in South Africa and welcome Nelson Mandela's call, in his recent address at the United Nations, for lifting the economic sanctions now in place against South Africa.

Although the fires of the cold war have been put out and have become something of the past, we cannot but voice our concern over the numerous difficulties which continue to beset the world economy. The gap is still wide between the average *per capita* income in developing countries and that in developed countries. In 1992, that figure was over $18,000 in the developed countries, while in the developing countries it did not exceed $800. There are distressing indications that the rate of world economic growth lags behind the rate of world population growth.

The continuing social deterioration and lack of economic security which result from continuous political upheavals will undoubtedly impede economic development in the long term. So long as the world economy continues to stagnate, the urgent social problems connected with the economy, in the areas of population, health, housing and environment, will continue to defy solution.

Any change in the world economy, whether it be negative or positive, affects every State. The world economy stands in need of the political will that should lead all the States of the world, especially the developed countries, to cooperate in solving those problems that face us all. This makes it incumbent upon us all to strengthen the role of the United Nations, as the Organization that has continued for about half a century, to embrace the countries of the world with the distinctive and varied experiences each and every country has gained in the areas of developmental coordination and cooperation.

Over the past decades, the world has been focusing on economic development owing to the immediate and speedy returns it generates for the world economy. Voices have been raised in the United Nations, in recent years, urging that attention should be paid to social development as well. This has led to the adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 47/92, in which it decided to convene a World Summit for Social Development early in 1995. We hope that those in charge of preparations for that conference will reach agreement to further those objectives of the Charter set out in Article 55, relating to the promotion of higher standards of living, conditions of economic and social progress and development as well as to the resolution of international economic and social problems.

Our planet faces man-made environmental threats whose consequences are unpredictable. The Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro was an important step towards world partnership in combating those environmental threats. We should like, in this context, to reiterate our support for the efforts to contain the threats to our environment, and we hope that the programmes adopted by the Rio Summit, especially those included in Agenda 21, will be implemented.

The attention focused on population problems stems from the tremendous density of population in some countries and the adverse effects that density has on development. We welcome the efforts by the United Nations and particularly by the United Nations Population Fund, to address such issues. We hope that the International Conference on Population and Development scheduled to be held in Cairo next year, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 47/176, will adopt recommendations that may ensure the resolution of urgent population and development problems in the next decade.

Several years have passed since the world first witnessed that novel, unique situation in the history of international relations, namely the ending of bipolarity. The result of this is that the world now stands at the crossroads of history, where it faces difficult challenges. This is especially so because certain evil tendencies have caused the eruption of volcanoes of malevolent hatreds and racism, which have destroyed many hopes and shattered the expectations of millions of people to achieve security and prosperity for future generations.

It may be appropriate to stop here and wonder whether the United Nations has done all it should to address the problems that have surfaced due to this major transformation in world order? Has the machinery which

we and many others have called for been made available to the world Organization to enable it to fulfil its role in a manner that is compatible with the developments of our time? Even if the United Nations has moved as we had hoped, have the Member States made available to it the material and moral resources to enable it to take effective action to address all of the world problems, wherever they may appear?

We do not believe anyone in today's world searches for the Utopia described in Plato's *Republic* or Farabi's *Ideal City*. Yet everyone would like to see the United Nations made able to achieve practical solutions for world problems. For it is our conviction that any blood shed by a hand prompted by an ethnic bigotry or racial hatred would be a clear indication of our failure to respond to the aspirations of all our peoples.

It is in this context that we call for resorting to reason in trying to understand the new phenomena and to deal with political, economic and social problems in a rational and dispassionate manner. The time has come for issues relating to international and regional security and development to be put in their proper realistic perspectives, without any idealistic flights of fancy. Such problems should be dealt with in the light of the objective realities of the world we live in with all its successive developments, so that the solutions devised for them may be applicable in the current atmosphere of inter-State rivalries. We are confident that, with political will, material support and moral encouragement, it will be possible for the United Nations to perform its role in steering the ship of hope towards the shores of security and peace we all seek.

ADDRESS BY MR. CHUAN LEEKPAI, PRIME MINISTER OF THE KINGDOM OF THAILAND

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will now hear a statement by the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Thailand.

Mr. Chuan Leekpai, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Thailand, was escorted to the rostrum.

The PRESIDENT: I have great pleasure in welcoming the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Thailand, His Excellency Mr. Chuan Leekpai, and inviting him to address the General Assembly.

Mr. LEEKPAI (Thailand): On behalf of the Government and the people of Thailand, may I extend my warmest congratulations to you, Sir, on your election as President of the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session. I am confident that you will provide the Assembly with the necessary leadership and direction in this period of systemic change in the international order.

I also wish to congratulate Mr. Stoyan Ganev of Bulgaria for having guided the forty-seventh session of the Assembly to a successful conclusion.

Allow me also to express our admiration to and support for Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali for his untiring efforts in guiding the United Nations through this period, when the Organization is being called upon to undertake peace-keeping activities around the globe on a scale unprecedented in its history. I also wish to congratulate him on his vision, so lucidly expressed in his report, "An Agenda for Peace." We look forward with anticipation to his forthcoming report on an agenda for development.

It is with great pleasure that we welcome, as full Members of the United Nations, Andorra, the Czech Republic, Eritrea, Monaco, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and the Slovak Republic. We sincerely believe that these States' assumption of their rightful places in the family of nations will further strengthen the universal character of the United Nations.

Before proceeding further, may I, on behalf of the Government and the people of Thailand, convey profound sympathy to and express solidarity with the Government and the people of India following the massive destruction and loss of life that resulted from the devastating earthquake last week.

With the end of the cold war, a new spirit of friendly cooperation prevails in South-East Asia. The international settlement of the Cambodian problem means that, for the first time in recent memory, the region is free of major armed conflict. With a view to constructing a new regional order of peace, harmony and prosperity, we the countries of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) are seeking to intensify various cooperative efforts among ourselves and with our neighbours and our friends outside the region.

ASEAN was born in Bangkok more than 26 years ago, when the cold war was at its height. Now, at the end of the cold war, ASEAN has attained the political and economic standing to play a greater role in the affairs of the region and beyond. Thailand will assume the ASEAN

chairmanship this year, and it looks forward to working with all concerned, both within and outside the Association, to advance the causes of peace and prosperity in South-East Asia.

As the ASEAN member geographically closest to the rest of South-East Asia, Thailand is in a unique position to serve as a bridge to our non-ASEAN neighbours. Thus, my Government wholeheartedly welcomes the accession by the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam and the Lao People's Democratic Republic to the ASEAN Treaty of Amity and Cooperation, which sets the broad framework for enhanced cooperation in South-East Asia. We earnestly hope that the day is not too distant when Laos and Viet Nam, together with Cambodia, which is on the path towards rejoining the international community, will become full members of ASEAN.

In seizing the opportunity to help to forge a new regional order of cooperative peace and common prosperity, ASEAN is increasingly appreciative of the function of multilateral diplomacy - particularly the enhanced cooperation between ASEAN and the United Nations.

For well over a decade, Cambodia has commanded the attention of the world. ASEAN and the United Nations have been working closely with each other to secure a durable political settlement of the Cambodian problem. In Cambodia, the United Nations has just undertaken one of the most comprehensive peace-keeping operations in its history. The Organization - essentially through the United Nations Transition Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) - must be congratulated for organizing the massive repatriation of Cambodian refugees from neighbouring Thailand and the crucial elections that resulted in the creation of a democratically elected majority Government in Cambodia, thus enhancing the prospect of national reconciliation. I should like to express my Government's appreciation to Mr. Yasushi Akashi, to his colleagues and to the men and women of UNTAC for successfully fulfilling their mission of helping to restore peace to Cambodia. Above all, our warmest congratulations go to the courageous Cambodian people themselves and, in particular, to His Majesty Samdech Norodom Sihanouk for his vital role in the restoration of the Cambodian nation.

Besides facilitating the return of more than 300,000 Cambodians to their homeland, Thailand had cooperated with the United Nations from the outset. We participated in the mine-clearing and road-building operations in western Cambodia, and, as I speak, Thailand is working closely with UNTAC in implementing the withdrawal of the remaining UNTAC personnel. Thailand will continue to participate in the international community's efforts to rehabilitate Cambodia. To this end, we welcome the success of the International Conference on the Reconstruction of Cambodia that was held in Paris in September this year. With the return of peace and normality to Cambodia, we are confident that the country will resume its rightful place in the South-East Asian family of nations. Thailand pledges its friendship and cooperation to the newly elected Government of Cambodia as it embarks on the path of nation-building.

In the post-cold-war world, the changing concept of security provides further impetus for the regional role of the United Nations. In the present era, security is defined in far broader terms than in the past. In particular, the non-military aspect of security has assumed greater urgency than, and now takes precedence over, its military dimension. It is now seen more as a confidence-building process than as a process of either defence or deterrence. Activities to "reassure" other parties, political dialogue and similar arrangements to engender and enhance mutual understanding, mutually beneficial collaborative efforts to solve common problems, crisis-management mechanisms and other preventive measures could all be subsumed under the heading of security.

Such a concept of security, particularly at the regional level, fits in well with the preventive-diplomacy approach. This is one area in which there is potential for the United Nations to define its role as being to strengthen and facilitate regional cooperation and understanding.

Naturally, all efforts in this regard must be undertaken within a multilateral framework. The collaborative agenda for preventive diplomacy would include conflict forecasting, conflict avoidance or prevention, conflict management, and the prevention of conflict escalation. In this regard, my Government welcomes the Secretary-General's excellent and comprehensive report "An Agenda for Peace", which represents new thinking and an innovative approach to strengthening the role of the United Nations. Moreover, my Government is heartened by the enthusiasm that Member States have shown for the report. Our next step must be full and speedy implementation of the recommendations put forward in the report, as well as those contained in various Security Council documents and in General Assembly resolution 47/120, which was adopted at the last session.

A mature and self-confident ASEAN is in a singular position to enhance the role and effectiveness of the United Nations in South-East Asia - particularly in the areas of preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, peace-keeping and peace-building. In the aftermath of the cold war, the success of the United Nations depends very much on close cooperation with countries in target regions. Put simply, the United Nations needs all the help it can get. Regional organizations can help to identify potential conflicts and, together with the United Nations, contain them before they erupt. Cooperation between the United Nations and a regional organization with a solid track record - such as ASEAN - can compensate for the weaknesses of any organization acting singly.

To explore how best the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) could act in accordance with the recommendations contained in "An Agenda for Peace", Thailand has initiated and organized, in collaboration with our ASEAN partner Singapore, a series of international workshops on ASEAN-United Nations cooperation for peace and preventive diplomacy.

The rationale behind this initiative is simple enough. The threat to international peace, actual or potential, often arises out of a certain specific region. With cold-war constraints on United Nations regional intervention removed, the Organization is in an ideal position to cooperate with ASEAN to ensure peace and stability in South-East Asia.

The foundation for such cooperation already exists. The ASEAN Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in South-East Asia forms the basis for a new code of conduct in the region and was endorsed by the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly.

Other factors may also favour United Nations preventive diplomacy in South-East Asia. One of these is the regional presence of the major Powers. Under certain circumstances, the United Nations provides a framework for action by major Powers. A case in point is Japan's peace-keeping role in the region under the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia. Arrangements could thus be made for these nations to play a "legitimate" crisis-prevention role involving, for example, political dialogue and mediation. Similarly, the regional economic development imperative may add impetus to United Nations regional involvement. The Organization has long been in place in South-East Asia in this regard. Its development commitments to and development efforts in the region have been evident in the location there of various United Nations regional bodies.

The next step will be to work out specific functional arrangements for ASEAN-United Nations cooperation. It is anticipated that the third and final workshop, to be held in Bangkok in January 1994, will come up with suggestions on appropriate mechanisms for fostering the conditions for regional peace and prosperity through closer cooperation between ASEAN and the United Nations.

The improved outlook for greater economic cooperation in the region is manifest in the enthusiasm for economic networking. Within ASEAN we have set up the ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA) to intensify intra-ASEAN economic cooperation and attract outside investment. The countries of South-East Asia are taking up the challenge of forging economic linkages through various schemes known as "growth triangles", "growth quadrangles" and "special economic zones". These linkages will help further promote the spirit of friendship and cooperation and serve to provide a nucleus for greater interaction with other parts of the world.

A livable world is a world in which governmental development strategies can be implemented in a favourable international environment. The international economy must provide a supportive climate for achieving environment and development goals. Among others, we must further pursue the liberalization of global trade policies, promote the efficient allocation of the world's resources, make trade and environment mutually compatible, and provide adequate financial and technical resources to developing countries.

These measures are prerequisites for creating a more prosperous world, where countries share their wealth in a liberal trading system and where fair competition is guaranteed by broadly accepted rules. For this reason, my Government believes that an early and successful conclusion of the Uruguay Round is imperative to revitalizing world trade. Thailand joins our ASEAN partners in welcoming the renewed determination and commitment of the industrialized countries at the recent Group of Seven meeting in Tokyo to resolve remaining problems and to conclude the Round by the end of this year.

Balanced world development is not only an enlightened aim, it is the foundation for the enduring progress of all societies. And this should be the basis for reactivating North-South cooperation. It should mark a

new beginning in international development cooperation based on the principle of the Cartagena commitments. It must go beyond aid to embrace partnership and reciprocal responsibilities. It must address global and regional concerns by meeting local needs.

The global consensus reached at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro last year has equipped us to take collective action to meet new priorities. We have built the consensus to pursue development which goes beyond economic growth. It is development in a comprehensive sense, guided by principles of equality and justice, and underpinned by social and ecological responsibility. As we, the leaders, proclaim change, we must demonstrate our political conviction through national policies that are in line with the international consensus.

My Government is fully committed to the implementation of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) agreement. Our national development plan for 1992 to 1996 reflects our determination to achieve sustainable development. My Government has taken various necessary administrative and legal steps to integrate the environment with development and to implement the programme of action as reflected in Agenda 21.

As my Government is the first elected Government following the May incident of 1992, we are more keenly aware of the intimate links between democracy, development, and human rights. Hence, democratization must be accompanied by sustained efforts to further the cause of human dignity and freedom.

Forty-five years ago, Thailand joined the international community in adopting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Since then, the international community has achieved a number of positive results in the protection and promotion of human rights.

From the time of the first International Conference on Human Rights in Teheran in 1968, the international community has assumed new responsibilities not only to protect but also to promote human rights. The time has come to work on the prevention of human rights abuses.

Last June, the World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna concluded with a consensus document. The Vienna Declaration brings together views on fundamental rights, and serves as a universal basis from which the international community will proceed. Thailand reaffirms its commitment to and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms as set out in the Vienna Declaration and Plan of Action.

The task before us now is to implement the recommendations of the Conference. In this regard, the United Nations has a central role to play. The Organization, with the collective efforts of its Member States, must strengthen the mechanisms for allocating sufficient human and financial resources to carry out the activities required of it.

Before I conclude, may I emphasize that Thailand has been fortunate enough to have the benefit of the guidance and wisdom of their Majesties the King and Queen in all spheres of national life. Indeed, our monarchy has been the symbol of national unity, a beacon of hope and the ultimate source of strength in the hearts of all Thai people.

Mr. President, let me conclude my statement by wishing you every success in your new responsibilities. You have a long and important session of the General Assembly ahead of you. I have no doubt that you will fulfil your responsibilities with great dignity and distinction.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Thailand for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Chuan Leekpai, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Thailand, was escorted from the rostrum.

Mr. ZIELENIEC (Czech Republic): Mr. President, let me start by congratulating you on your election to this high office. I am sure that under your leadership this year's General Assembly will be particularly successful and effective.

Today is the first time that a representative of the Czech Republic has had the honour to address the United Nations General Assembly as part of the general debate. The Czech Republic is indeed a new State. Still, the division of Czechoslovakia is nothing to be happy about. It is always better for equal communities to unite than to separate. However, once we determined that the continued existence of Czechoslovakia could not be assured by quiet and peaceful means, we strove to separate peacefully. While in other parts of the world similar separations are frequently accompanied by terror and violence, in our country not a single window pane was broken. This experience makes us believe that good will and common

sense can lead to peaceful settlements, even of problems traditionally accompanied by violence.

The Czech Republic is currently undergoing profound political and economic changes. On the political side, we are constructing a democratic regime in what used to be the communist world. The Government has proven to be a stable one. Meanwhile, we emphasize human rights, and our robust press freedom as well as our human-rights record have been recognized even by very finicky non-partisan international organizations.

On the economic side, the Czech Republic has also chalked up certain successes. Privatization of property that was formerly State-owned is continuing apace. Prices are being freed so that they can find their natural, market-driven level. Meanwhile, we have managed to maintain tight monetary policies, keep inflation and unemployment at rather modest levels, and hold to a balanced budget. We live within our means.

In this context, let me emphasize one thing. We are managing the process of economic transformation with our own efforts and our own resources. We do not ask for direct financial assistance. We do not seek to siphon off scarce development resources from countries whose situation is much worse than ours. We tell our friends from developed countries, "We seek trade not aid from you. Open your markets to us, not your pocketbooks." Actually, open markets would benefit all of us, whether our economies are developed or developing, settled or in transition. This is why we are convinced that the successful conclusion of the Uruguay Round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade would finally benefit us all.

In addition to the transition of our domestic political system and the transformation of our economic system, we have also modified our foreign policy. One of our foreign policy priorities concerns Slovakia. Over the last months, the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic have been learning how to live together as two independent countries, rather than as two regions of the same country. We have concluded a series of agreements and treaties, and have become used to having an international border between us - a border, I stress, which is peaceful.

We are assuming our natural place in Europe. My country has recently been accepted as a member of the Council of Europe, which my President is about to address in a day or two. Just two days ago in Luxembourg I signed a Europe Agreement with the European Economic Community. Also unmistakable is the transatlantic dimension of our diplomacy, as exemplified by our activities within the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) and the North Atlantic Council for Cooperation (NACC), and by our interest in joining the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

Our relations with the developing world have also been changing. On the one hand, there is a long history of friendly relations with many countries which we are now trying to put on a new and more balanced footing. On the other hand, we are seeking cooperation with a number of important countries which until recently had been ignored for political reasons. Thousands of physicians and technicians from the developing world who have been trained in our universities act today as so many goodwill ambassadors for us. I am sure that in a short time we will be able to provide appropriate economic assistance to needy regions of the world, preferably through multilateral channels.

Our foreign policy is that of a small country and reflects that country's position in Europe and in the world. It is, however, an independent foreign policy which is not beholden to anyone and which does not blindly copy the foreign policy of any other country.

The end of the cold war era is connected with the fall of European communism, and its consequences have not yet been fully grasped. While the danger of a world nuclear catastrophe has significantly abated, conflicts provoked by political, ethnic, religious, social and economic disputes have flared up. Meanwhile, rays of hope have appeared in regions where we perhaps did not expect them. I have in mind the prospects for a peaceful settlement in the Middle East, the shaping of a democratic process in the Republic of South Africa and last, but not least, the success of the United Nations in Cambodia.

In recent days we have been following with great concern developments in the Russian Federation. We had hoped that Russia's problems would be settled peacefully, but the anti-reformist opposition initiated violence. Free and democratic elections are the only solution to the situation. Elections will determine whether those who waved the Russian flag in Moscow or those who waved the communist red flag should guide Russia's future.

Post-cold-war conflicts have shaken many of the values, principles and certainties with which we have been living. Nowhere have these values been questioned as radically and as viciously as in the countries of the former

Yugoslavia during the several wars that have taken place there in recent years. Wars in the former Yugoslavia, the Caucasus and elsewhere have made us aware of the need to ask old questions anew, to re-examine concepts that have been basic to international politics since the Second World War.

These questions concern, for example, self-determination; the role of internal borders as new States emerge; non-interference in internal affairs; international recognition of new States and its timing; and probably others. We will need to scrutinize them far more daringly and rigorously and with far greater imagination. Here, I think, is where some of the greatest challenges for the United Nations will arise in the immediate future. This is treacherous ground, but it might offer one possible vehicle in the search for guidance in the times ahead.

Today, however, the fighting in Bosnia and Herzegovina seems to be resulting in a division of that country along ethnic lines. We find the enforced coincidence of statehood with ethnicity odious. We cherish the principle of a civic society in which citizens enjoy equal rights regardless of their ethnic background, mother tongue or religious creed. By contrast, we feel that ethnic, not to mention religious, purity is a concept from another age, irrelevant in the modern world. We regard as inadmissible any violent changes of frontiers as well as "ethnic cleansing" accompanied by massive and flagrant violations of human rights.

One need not stress how important for my country - particularly when it was not free - was adherence to human rights, including their codification by the United Nations. Individual, universally valid human rights and their observance are inseparably linked to democracy and prosperity. This year's World Conference on Human Rights held in Vienna was an important turning-point. In our opinion, a more effective use of the means spent on the protection of human rights, the concentration of activities into one body, and the establishment of the office of a high commissioner for human rights would be steps in the right direction.

The Czech Republic is proud of its share in the work of the United Nations. Let me mention some of our contributions. Currently we have military observers in Mozambique and in the former Yugoslavia. Two more teams are to be deployed in Georgia and in Liberia. Others have helped keep the peace in Angola and in Somalia. We have an infantry battalion stationed in Croatia under the command of the United Nations Protection Force. Our civilian observers monitored Haiti's elections. Our military participated in the liberation of Kuwait. Our specialists are working for the United Nations Special Commission. A large group of security personnel is about to join the United Nations guard contingent in Iraq. Our officers also served for 40 years on the armistice line in Korea as members of the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission. This demonstrates our tradition of service to the international community, a tradition of shouldering our fair share of the international burden.

Along different lines, we have participated for 30 years in the work of the United Nations decolonization Committee. And as I look around this Hall, I realize that there is not a single country among the 130 or so which have been admitted after the founding of the United Nations that we would not have helped assume its seat here.

As members of the Assembly know, the Czech Republic is running in elections for one of the non-permanent seats on the Security Council. We are running on our record - our record of service and the record of our experience. On this basis I ask members for their support in the forthcoming elections.

As many have already mentioned in the general debate, the world is different than it was 50 years ago. Consequently, the United Nations and its Security Council have reached a turning-point. Still, it is the considered opinion of my Government that, on the whole, the Security Council now serves us well. In the past few years, it has ceased to be a mere side-show in world politics. Indeed, it has frequently come to occupy centre stage. As a result, the Council and the United Nations as a whole are striving to meet the rising expectations the world is pinning on them.

Whatever changes we suggest, we must proceed responsibly in efforts to reform the Council, in the spirit of mutual understanding and consensus. The Security Council must adapt to the new political, economic, social and security realities of the world. Some countries have become important members of the international community. An expansion of the Security Council must above all respect principles of effectiveness and responsibility for implementing its own decisions. A just geographical representation is equally important.

However, some changes should be made today. There is a certain sense of frustration among non-members of the

Security Council, which is steadily increasing the number of its informal meetings behind closed doors. We need greater transparency. We need more communication. We need a better balance between the Council and the General Assembly.

In this respect, distributing the monthly agenda of the Security Council to Members is a welcome first step. Inviting the chairmen of regional groups for briefings is also helpful. I am sure that the Council will find further measures along these lines that could be implemented immediately. If the Czech Republic is elected, my Permanent Mission will try to identify other such measures.

The credibility of the United Nations hangs on, *inter alia*, the performance of some 80,000 military and civilian members of United Nations forces in 17 peace-keeping operations all over the world. Crisis management now includes not only the classical separation of adversaries but also the protection of humanitarian convoys, the monitoring of elections and the observance of human rights. Peace-keepers are sent more often to countries where there are no functioning Governments and where agreements are worth only the paper they are written on. Thus, Blue Helmets are increasingly becoming the targets of uncontrolled armed groups. Even as we hold this general debate, members of peace-keeping forces are dying in clashes with warlords.

The Czech Republic welcomes the intensifying discussion of the Secretary-General's "An Agenda for Peace". The resolution adopted at the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly is a first step, however small, in the right direction. However, much more intensive cooperation not only among Member States but also between Member States and the United Nations Secretariat is needed in order to create an effective mechanism of functioning peace-keeping. The work of our Organization must correspond to the changing character of peace-keeping. One interesting idea is the proposal to create a working group under the auspices of the Security Council that would review these issues and prepare proposals and recommendations.

The considerable number of regional and domestic conflicts is a part of the global security picture. Cooperation between the United Nations and regional institutions is another useful instrument for solving them. The Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) is one organization that plays an important role in the Euro-Asian area. The first formal step towards cooperation between the United Nations and the CSCE was resolution 47/10, adopted at the last session of the United Nations General Assembly. Not by accident, the cooperation and coordination of these two organizations was formalized during Czechoslovakia's presidency of the CSCE. The limited resources of both organizations force us to try to coordinate and complement their operations and missions.

Guided by our own vital interests, we have been striving to develop closer cooperation and interaction with organizations capable of giving effective security guarantees. This, however, does not mean we want passively to let others look after our security. On the contrary, we wish to be active participants in this two-way process. This effort involves, for example, the following: first, our constructive contribution, as a country with an advanced nuclear industry, towards the strengthening of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and its extension beyond 1995; secondly, the adoption of obligations to reduce the risks of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, particularly through joining the Missile Technology Control Regime and the so-called Australia Group; and thirdly, the early ratification and thorough implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons.

A financial crisis is threatening our Organization. The financial discipline of Member States is but one prerequisite for improving the situation. Equally important is the need to make more effective use of available resources and to strengthen the control of Member States in using them. We need to make better use of existing control mechanisms. We favour the creation of a strong, meaningful post of an inspector general.

The United Nations system also pays great attention to the problems of social development, and a lot of good work has been done since development programmes and specialized agencies were established. The Czech Republic considers the problems of economic and social development to be one of the priorities for international policy-making, as these issues directly influence other current burning issues, such as local and ethnic wars, drugs, poverty and undernourishment in some regions of the world.

However, despite the numerous successes of specialized agencies, there is considerable space for further improvement of their performance and efficiency. We think there is room for improvement in, *inter alia*, focusing

more carefully on specific targets; eliminating overlap in some activities; utilizing available resources more effectively; reducing bureaucracy and enhancing flexibility; and developing greater cooperation among agencies.

Environmental issues are also high on our agenda, as parts of our country are in the most environmentally devastated areas of the world. The situation is not only taking its toll on people's health but is also undermining the economy of the country as a whole. Sustainable development is more than a new-fangled catchword for us: in our country, it means finding the right balance between environmental concerns and aspirations of development.

The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) was an important step forward in tackling this problem in all its dimensions. All UNCED-related decisions adopted at the forty-seventh session of the United Nations General Assembly are very important. The Czech Republic will take part in their implementation, even if not all of them relate directly to its national interests. We welcome the creation of the Commission on Sustainable Development. The mandate of the Commission, its programme of work and the experience it has accumulated even during the short period of its existence indicate its budding importance. The Czech Republic, as a member of the Commission, is seriously involved in its work.

Central and Eastern parts of Europe border on a zone of instability. We have gained priceless experience in solving problems resulting from the disintegration of the totalitarian world, even as we perceive the world through the eyes of a stable European democracy. This dual vision can help us identify risks and seek their solutions. We feel we have something to contribute, and we are prepared to shoulder our share of responsibility for world affairs. This is one of the reasons why the Czech Republic submitted its candidacy as a non-permanent member of the Security Council. We believe we will be able effectively to use our experience and our perception of the world, and we hope that you will all support us.

Mr. WONG (Singapore): Since PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat shook hands with the Israeli Prime Minister on the White House lawn, nothing seems impossible any more. The end of the cold war has opened opportunities to set aside some of the most intractable, destructive and polarizing conflicts of our time.

Apartheid is coming to an end in South Africa. Eastern Europe is free. Russia and the other States of the former Soviet Union are shaking off the stifling effects of more than 70 years of communism. Germany has been peacefully reunited.

In Asia, Cambodia is moving towards national reconciliation after almost 20 years of war. Viet Nam and Laos are reintegrating themselves into the South-East Asian community.

China and Taiwan held direct informal talks in Singapore and Beijing this year. They will continue their own dialogue at their own pace. They should be encouraged to build confidence by working together, as they already have in the Asian Development Bank and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Council (APEC) and as they hope to do in the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT).

Change has its own dynamic. And not all changes are benign. The post-cold-war problems are legion and well known. It will be a challenge for the United Nations to respond. In recent years, there has been a marked expansion in the number and scope of the operations and activities authorized by the Security Council.

Established procedures, such as the Security Council-mandated Commission that has demarcated the boundary between Iraq and Kuwait, have made and will continue to make positive contributions to stabilizing the post-cold-war world, providing authoritative reference points. United Nations specialized agencies, such as the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), are playing an important role in holding renegade countries like North Korea to internationally accepted standards of conduct in the critical area of nuclear non-proliferation. The international community must continue to support such tried and tested measures and organizations.

But there is also an expectation that the end of the cold war will enable the Security Council to play more ambitious roles and at last assume "primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security" under Chapters V and VII of the Charter. In Cambodia, Haiti and Somalia, among other places, the United Nations is breaking new ground by actively interposing itself as a vital stabilizing actor in situations which would once have been considered essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of States.

The legal, diplomatic and political implications of these developments are still unfolding and are not yet fully understood. Not everyone is entirely comfortable with

them. But I believe that most Member States regard the trend as generally positive and as making for a more secure world. The majority wants a more active and effective Security Council.

The Secretary-General's report on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council, submitted in accordance with General Assembly resolution 47/62, has thus occasioned great interest. There is wide consensus that if it is to be effective in the next century the Security Council cannot simply extrapolate its mandate from the starting-point of 1945 after the cold-war interregnum, but must accurately reflect the current configuration of global power. International order cannot be built on nostalgia. Too great a disjuncture from reality will doom the Security Council to eventual irrelevance. As membership of the United Nations expands, there is also a general expectation that the Security Council should become more representative of the Organization as a whole.

The composition of the Security Council is a compromise between the principle of the sovereign equality of States and the realities of power politics. That all States are equal but that some, for better or for worse, have a disproportionate influence on the international order is a fact of life. Great-Power leadership is vital. It is a reality. Recognition of the special status of great Powers is thus a requisite for effective action by the Security Council. When it comes to the crunch, only the great Powers can make a decisive difference. But the temper of our times also demands that if action is to command a general consensus: the great must seek the mandate of the many.

The issue is, however, more easily defined than resolved. The only previous increase in the size of the Security Council began in the 1956 session of the General Assembly with discussions on an increase of non-permanent seats. Agreement was reached only in 1963 and came into force two years later, almost a decade after the process had begun. The lapse of time shows the complexities involved.

The difficulties are still with us. To be sure, there are established principles laid down in Article 23 (1) of the Charter to guide the way to a possible further expansion of non-permanent seats. But there are no such guidelines for the more crucial question of an increase in permanent members. The Secretary-General's report must therefore be realistically considered as only the beginning of a long process of debate whose outcome cannot be confidently predicted at this point.

There are two basic problems. The first is simply to decide what is the current configuration of international power that should be reflected in the distribution of permanent seats. This is not as straightforward as it may seem. When the Charter was being drafted, the end of the Second World War, with easily discernible winners and losers, was in sight and was being prepared for. The intention was for the winners to have primary responsibility for guiding the new international order. Yet even then, two of the "Big Three" victors, the Soviet Union and the United Kingdom, were sceptical of Roosevelt's view of China's ability to play a major role in the post-war world. Churchill's insistence on including France among the elite group was met with similar scepticism by Roosevelt and Stalin.

It will be even more difficult to decide who belongs to the new elite. The end of the cold war took everyone by surprise and was far from clear-cut in its resolution. Economic, political and military power no longer necessarily cohere in one single locus. The United States is victor, but its economic recovery is slow and its competitiveness blunted. Russia is in serious economic and political difficulties but, because it has nuclear weapons, it remains a military great Power exercising a commanding influence on its former dominions, where the threat of chaos in the post-cold-war world is also greatest. Japan and Germany are clearly world economic powerhouses, but both lack an internal and regional consensus on the use of military forces beyond their borders.

The second problem is even more fundamental and vexing. The United Nations is an international Organization. It is not and was never intended to be a supranational organization. The United Nations was created by sovereign States and can do nothing without their assent, in which process the permanent members have a more than proportionate say through their veto. I state this without rancour as a fact well known to all. Any design for enhancing the effectiveness of the Security Council therefore cannot just be based on abstract wisdom concerning the requisites of the international order. No plan that has any prospect of succeeding can avoid reckoning with calculations of the national advantage of the current permanent members.

But if the new Security Council is really to reflect the current international distribution of power, the process should logically entail the deposition of some from the elite as well as the anointment of other. Even if some were to be elevated without necessarily displacing others,

the expansion of the small group of the select would imply the relative diminution of the status of the current permanent members. It is not surprising, therefore, that only one permanent member has so far come out unambiguously in favour of an expansion in the number of permanent seats. It does not take a cynic to wonder whether it was emboldened to do so because the others have been so conspicuously coy on this critical point. No country has ever voluntarily relinquished privilege and power. We are after all in the company of sovereign States, not saints.

There is no circumventing the veto. There is no constitutional means of amending the Charter without the assent of all the permanent members, some of whom may believe they stand to lose by it. Yet change is imperative if we are not to squander the opportunity afforded by the end of the cold war - more so for small States that have few better choices than an effective United Nations for their security.

To make progress, there is no alternative but gradually to shape a consensus through a patient process of debate and discussion. To force the pace or attempt to impose a majority agreement will not work. At this preliminary stage, it would be most useful to try to identify and build consensus on objective general criteria that all permanent members, present or aspiring, must fulfil. This is a more clinical and constructive approach than engaging in a horse race or a beauty contest to pick specific countries. To attempt to do so at this stage is premature and would only be divisive. But the identification of objective criteria will set a common standard and, if we can agree on them, a consensus on specific countries will naturally emerge.

This will entail thinking through the role of the United Nations into the next century. What challenges will the United Nations face in the next decade? What will be the role and priorities of a new Security Council under these conditions? What capabilities will it need? These difficult questions demand the most exhaustive possible examination. The General Assembly should consider the formation of a working group, representative of the whole membership, to consider them and formulate agreed objective criteria for the expansion of the Security Council, especially its permanent membership.

To stimulate discussion, Singapore suggests the following:

First, there should be a level playing field with regard to all present and future members of a possible expanded Security Council. Anachronistic references to "enemy States" in Articles 53, 77 and 107 of the Charter should be removed. It is time to set aside the baggage of the past. Suggestions that there could be or should be a different set of permanent members without the veto are also impractical. No country that is capable of making a contribution as a new permanent member will accept such second-class status for long. It will only undermine the principle of great-Power cooperation, in the absence of which the Security Council cannot function. Nor is it practical or even desirable to do away with the veto. The fact that the veto has been abused does not detract from its intended function. It is a recognition of the hard reality that great Powers will not consent to put their power at the disposal of a sheer majority for the implementation of decisions which they do not agree with. It is a safety valve that prevents the United Nations from undertaking commitments that it lacks the power to fulfil. However, to minimize the misuse of the veto, if permanent membership is expanded at least two vetoes should be required to block a resolution.

Secondly, privilege must be paid for. An expanded role for the Security Council will require more resources. A United Nations perennially on the brink of financial insolvency cannot effectively meet the challenges of the next century. A permanent member should therefore carry a larger portion of the financial burden of the United Nations. Each permanent member should pay at least 9 per cent of the operating expenses of the United Nations as well as 11 per cent of the costs of the peace-keeping operations of the United Nations, which are the average percentages of the permanent five's current collective percentage of these budgets.

Thirdly, permanent members must have muscle and the will and the capability to wield it for the cause of the United Nations. The main mission and primary responsibility of the Security Council is to maintain international peace and stability. Force will be needed in pursuit of order and the Security Council cannot be effective without a sword that is sharp and ready. All permanent members should be prepared to give effect to Article 43 of the Charter and be ready to place their military forces at the disposal of the United Nations and shed blood to uphold international order if necessary.

This list is by no means exhaustive. Other members will have their own suggestions for appropriate criteria. I urge all members to participate in discussions on the expansion of the Security Council so that we may have the

benefit of the fullest possible range of views and emerge with the widest possible consensus.

Finally, Mr. President, I should like to congratulate you on your unanimous election. I am confident that you will lead the Assembly at this session effectively. I should also like to take this opportunity to welcome the six new Members that have joined the Organization. I am certain that they will contribute positively to the work of the United Nations.

Mr. TSERING (Bhutan): I have the honour to convey to all members of the Assembly the warm greetings and good wishes of His Majesty Jigme Singye Wangchuck, King of Bhutan, for the success of the forty-eighth session of the United Nations General Assembly.

I begin by congratulating you, Mr. President, on your unanimous election. We are confident that with your wide knowledge and experience you will provide proper direction to our discussions. We would also like to pay a tribute to our outgoing President, Mr. Stoyan Ganev, for the exemplary manner in which he led the Assembly at the last session.

We extend a warm welcome to the peoples and Governments of Andorra, the Czech Republic, Eritrea, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Monaco and the Republic of Slovakia on their joining the family of nations. We are confident that their membership will add to the strength and vitality of the Organization.

We would like to pay a special tribute to our Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for his dynamic leadership. His initiatives have already started to steer the course of the United Nations into new and bold directions. His report to the Assembly is clear and concise and provides a good basis for the work of this session.

The momentous events taking place around us in this new decade continue to pose challenges and offer opportunities of an unprecedented scale. The handshake on the White House lawn between Prime Minister Rabin and Chairman Arafat opened a window for peace and tolerance in the Middle East after a century of hatred and suspicion. When President Clinton called the agreement the "peace of the brave", he paid just tribute to their courage. Deep-seated emotions will continue to blur reason and not all groups will take to the road of healing at the same pace. We join those calling on extremist factions on both sides to desist from the use of force. My delegation hopes that the agreement will lead to a comprehensive and durable peace on the basis of relevant Security Council resolutions. We appeal to the international community to give even stronger support to the implementation of the agreement in all its aspects.

With regard to the situation in the Persian Gulf, we urge all parties to abide by Security Council resolution 833 (1993). It is our view that for the full recognition of Kuwait's sovereignty, the boundary as demarcated by the United Nations must be internationally respected.

My delegation is happy with the progressive dismantling of apartheid and the process towards universal franchise in South Africa. We have recently heard in this forum Mr. Mandela's historic call to end all sanctions against South Africa, a call which must be speedily honoured.

We applaud the positive results of United Nations involvement in Cambodia, El Salvador and Haiti. These successes, however, have not yet been replicated in Somalia and Bosnia. My delegation strongly condemns violence against United Nations peace-keeping and humanitarian workers. As the need for peace-keeping in other parts of the world grows, it is clear that in future the terms of every intervention must be carefully defined.

My delegation welcomes the reduction in the international arsenal of nuclear and other weapons and we support the continuation of the Non-Proliferation Treaty beyond 1995.

With regard to the nuclear situation on the Korean peninsula, we urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to comply fully with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Safeguards Agreement in order to avoid any suspicion and speculation.

In an age focused on reducing the world's nuclear arsenal, further testing is unnecessary and inconsistent. We urge all nuclear States not to carry out further tests and to continue negotiations towards a comprehensive test ban.

While the world's nuclear arms and other weapons of mass destruction are being dismantled, we are aware that conventional weapons are used in all present-day conflicts. No country which supplies arms can dissociate itself from the moral responsibility for the use of such arms. We fully support the United Nations Register on Conventional Arms and urge the reduction of the international arms trade.

Over the past two years, considerable emphasis has been put on streamlining the United Nations Secretariat and making it more efficient. At the last two sessions the General Assembly has directed its attention not only towards reforming and revitalizing the United Nations but also towards making the General Assembly a more effective and responsive forum. While some progress has been made, the discussion on reforming and restructuring the United Nations continues. We cannot expect the United Nations, formed nearly five decades ago with just 50 members, to remain unchanged and yet be able to fulfil the hopes and expectations of the current 184 Members in a vastly different world. Clearly, the reforms and revitalization cannot be limited to managerial and organizational changes: the roles and responsibilities of all the principal organs of the United Nations must be taken into account.

My delegation believes that during our discussion on reforming the United Nations, the time is opportune to enlarge the Security Council. The expansion of its membership must be taken up together with the issue of accountability. While it is necessary to preserve the Security Council's new-found effectiveness, it must always be made accountable for its actions to the General Assembly.

The need for reform and restructuring seems in recent months to have been somewhat overshadowed by the Organization's financial difficulties and questions of effective operations and proper accountability. We fully agree that it is necessary to minimize waste and streamline operations. These issues, however, must be pursued independently of the concerns over the financial health of the United Nations. We urge all Members to pay their assessed contributions promptly. We are of the view that the current level of assessment has fully taken into account both the financial capacity of Member States to contribute and the role they have assumed in the Organization. There is a saying in my country that one must load the pony according to its ability to carry the burden. Although the United Nations has travelled far in the last three years, it is clear now that we cannot keep overloading it without putting the necessary means and resources at its disposal.

The Second World Conference on Human Rights, held in Vienna this year, clearly recognized that social progress and political stability cannot be ensured without respect for human rights. The Conference also recognized that human rights and social progress can be promoted and preserved only in a healthy economic and natural environment. For our part, we are fully committed to advancing the human rights of all our people.

This year, as agreed to in Agenda 21 of the Earth Summit, the Commission on Sustainable Development has been established. The work of this Commission will provide a new direction for the preservation of the environment and give added impetus to developmental activities. We recognize that while all development must take place at local and national levels, there are clearly regional and international dimensions for which solutions must be found at the global level. Bhutan looks forward to participating in the upcoming global conferences on population and development, the World Summit for Social Development and the Fourth World Conference on Women.

The recession that has afflicted much of the world economy in the past year has not shown any signs of improvement. In such conditions, it is hardly surprising that the economic performances of most of the world's least developed countries have continued to be dismal. Per capita income for the one tenth of the world's population which lives in these countries has fallen in the past three years despite the adoption of the United Nations Programme of Action in 1990. While the least developed countries have begun to initiate bold and painful structural reforms in their economies, budget constraints on donor nations and competing claims on aid resources have continued to slow down the flow of official development assistance to the least developed countries. While expressing our gratitude to donors who have met and even exceeded official development assistance targets, my delegation would like to appeal to the others to follow suit so that the reforms can be sustained and promoted.

The sluggish international economic climate in the last two years has been further compounded by a spate of unusually harsh natural disasters that have affected many parts of the world. We would like to express our heartfelt sympathies to all those in the United States of America, Japan, Nepal, and India who have suffered heavy loss of life and property because of recent natural calamities. The capacity to respond to such disasters should be placed high on the international agenda. This includes long-term investment in environmental conservation and other measures, including early warning facilities, to protect against natural disasters.

Bhutan continues to make considerable progress in the field of social and economic development. We are currently in the process of decentralizing the administration

in terms of decision-making and implementation of development projects. We are also giving priority to the development of human resources. In all our nation-building activities, we have sought to protect our rich natural environment and distinctive national identity. In our efforts, we have continued to receive generous support from India, Japan, Switzerland, Denmark, the Netherlands, Kuwait, Austria, Norway, Germany, the United Kingdom and Australia, and from various specialized agencies and bodies of the United Nations, particularly the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Fund for Activites (UNFPA), the United Nations Capital Development Fund, (UNCDF), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the World Food Programme (WFP), the United Nations Volunteers (UNV), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). I take this opportunity to express the sincere gratitude of the people and Government of Bhutan to our development partners.

This is an age of multilateralism, and the United Nations is the centre around which this new age will revolve. The United Nations is no longer just the preserver of world order but an active promoter of peace and human advancement. Increasing cooperation among its Members since the end of the cold war has made it possible for the Organization to become more effective in pursuing these objectives. The long-term success of the United Nations, in our view, will depend on how democratic it becomes in its functioning and to what extent it will involve all its Members, large and small, in the decision-making process. We hope that the United Nations will become the centerpiece of a more just and equitable world order and will speak for the whole of humanity rather than just for a privileged few.

The PRESIDENT: Despite at least two reminders on my part so far of the Assembly's decision to prohibit the practice of expressing congratulations in the precincts of this Hall, this practice appears to flourish. It is not my intention to have this decision further undermined under my watch. I therefore warn all delegations that if the practice resumes, I shall be forced to interrupt the speaker - discourteously, of course - to allow for order to be restored. I appeal once again to the Assembly to respect the decision we have all taken together for the orderly performance of our work.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.